

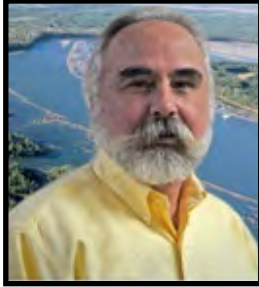
bluffton

HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY™

# Bluffton Mayor and Town Council



Fred Hamilton  
Councilman



Ted Huffman  
Mayor Pro Tempore



Lisa Sulka  
Mayor



Karen Lavery  
Councilwoman



Larry Toomer  
Councilman

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# Message from Mayor Sulka



Lisa Sulka, Bluffton Mayor

On behalf of myself and the Bluffton Town Council, I extend a warm and friendly welcome from our town, where we live and breathe the Bluffton State of Mind every day.

Our town, and county has gone through many changes over the past 10 years- unprecedented growth, one of the worst recessions we have seen in a long time, public safety, transportation issues, and environmental concerns. Through it all, I know that we have come out better, and all of these have made us look hard and long at how we can be proactive rather than reactive. Areas that we have paid attention to and made many accomplishments on are:

Finance- Over the past 5 years, our town has developed a zero based budgeting format which puts us in excellent financial condition. The town also holds a "AA+" bod rating issued by Standard's and Poor and continues to receive awards for excellence for accounting.

Transportation- The County's close to completing all of the road projects from the 2006 penny referendum, with the most recent of projects being the flyover to Hilton Head Island and SC170.

Environmental - The protection of our natural resources, especially the May River is important to our town. We have adopted/developed the May River Watershed Action Plan, sewer installations in sensitive areas, and a watershed master plan for sewer installations.

Growth- We adopted the Bluffton Growth Framework Map for all of Bluffton, especially the newer annexed areas. We learned from the recession that we need to be in charge of where we want the growth to be in our town, and with the feedback we received from hundreds of residents, over an 18 month period, this framework map puts the larger densities in areas far away from the sensitive areas in our watershed.

Public Safety- We have a strong partnership with Beaufort County Sheriff's Department. The Bluffton Police Department has been certified with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), an Accreditation with Excellence, which is the highest level of recognition of the accreditation process.

Today, these initiatives have made us a stronger Bluffton community.

A brief look into more of our accomplishments over the past year include:

- A strong relationship with Beaufort County and memorandums of understanding with them on our Oyster Factory Park and Calhoun Street dock.
- National attention in publications like Money Magazine, Garden & Gun, Forbes, and Huffington Post to name a few.
- The final phase of the May River Streetscape- construction on this will begin in early 2016.
- Don Ryan for Innovation- To date, we have graduated 12 companies and from these companies have come 77 additional jobs in our region adding over \$4,100,000 in annual payroll. Strong partnerships have been developed with the Beaufort County School District and Savannah College of Art and Design.
- We continue to be a "transparent" government in every aspect of our Town. Agendas, staff reports, financial reports, minutes, budgets, project cost and progress, and a calendar of events are some of the documents that can be found on the Town website, at [www.townofbluffton.sc.gov](http://www.townofbluffton.sc.gov).

It is a great honor to be your Mayor and I feel that we have served our Town well over the past year in setting and achieving our goals that were laid out in our yearly Strategic Planning Workshop.

We are here to serve and if we can ever be of assistance please feel free to send an email or give us a call.

It is my pleasure to present the Town of Bluffton's 2015 Annual Report, which highlights another extraordinary year of achievement for the Town. These accomplishments become a new benchmark as Bluffton remains committed to continuous improvement and to raising the bar ever higher in fulfilling Town Council's Vision. As a staff, we strive to honor the Town's mission to provide excellent services, act in a financially responsible manner, and provide great customer service.

This year Town Council adopted a \$29.1 million consolidated budget to meet the emerging, programmatic, public amenity, and infrastructure needs of our growing community. A record setting Capital Improvement Project budget was adopted and includes replacement of aging septic systems with public sewer infrastructure in the May River Watershed, investment in Historic

**"The Town of Bluffton continues to be highly committed to implementing innovative programs providing a direct benefit to the Bluffton community"**

Preservation and Heritage Tourism initiatives, public infrastructure installation at Buckwalter Place Commerce Park, and streetscape and park improvements in the Bluffton Historic District. Through support from our strategic partners, successful application of Federal and State grants and our use of accommodations/hospitality tax funds, as well as stormwater utility fee funds, this ambitious program has minimal impact on property taxes. With sound fiscal management the Town has established a sustainable, results oriented budget with growing reserves. As a result, the Town's AA+ General Obligation Bond Rating was reaffirmed by Standard's and Poor for the second year in a row allowing continued investment in

Town-wide public projects with lower interest rates for taxpayers on Town indebtedness.

The Town of Bluffton continues to be highly committed to implementing innovative program that provides a direct benefit to the Bluffton community. Through the Bluffton Police Department's Community Policing practices, providing a safe and healthy community remains a top service priority. We highly respect and appreciate the work of the Police Department. Further, the Town continues to invest in the sustainability of the Don Ryan Center for Innovation and the Bluffton Public Development Corporation. In a little more than three years, the Don Ryan Center for Innovation has incubated 24 companies and assisted with the creation of 77 company employees in the regional workforce with more than a \$4 million annual payroll.

Several regional, national and international organizations have honored the Town this past year for its commitment to innovation, excellence and sustainability. The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) re-accredited the Bluffton Police Department with an Accreditation with Excellence, the highest level of recognition of the reaccreditation process. Further, the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada awarded the Town the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. Garden & Gun Magazine gave Bluffton the title of a "Southern Dream Town", and Forbes Magazine named Bluffton one of the Top 25 U.S. Cities for Retirement.

The Town continues to experience significant growth and has realized many established goals thanks to the leadership and dedication of the Town of Bluffton Town Council, the outstanding work of our Town employees, and guidance from appointed Board, Commission, and Committee members. I would like to like to express my sincere appreciation

# Message from Town Manager, Marc Orlando

to the Town of Bluffton Town Council, Town Staff, and the community for their leadership and support. One of the greatest rewards of working for the Town of Bluffton is to be a part of this deep community pride. If I can be of service to you, please contact me at [morlando@townofbluffton.com](mailto:morlando@townofbluffton.com).



**Marc Orlando, Town Manager, ICMA-CM**

# The Mission of the Town of Bluffton is to:

***"Provide excellent basic services"***

***"Act in a financially responsible manner"***

***"Provide great customer service and engage our community"***

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## 2020 GOALS



Livable Sustainable Bluffton Community that Enhances Quality of Life



Town Government: Excellent Services



Celebrate the May River



Regional Economic Center with Diverse Economy



Upgraded Town Infrastructure and Facilities

## Vision 2030

Bluffton in 2030 is a: BEAUTIFUL SOUTHERN TOWN that is the HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY and the REGIONAL CENTER OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

The Bluffton Community has an AUTHENTIC HISTORIC DISTRICT, celebrates the MAY RIVER and respects THE BLUFFTON CHARACTER.

Bluffton is a COMMUNITY OF LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS and has UNIQUE COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS.

Bluffton Residents enjoy an ACTIVE LIFESTYLE and OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE FUN.



The Bluffton Public Development Corporation was established in the 2012 by Town Council and incorporated as a 501(c)(3) community driven organization. The Corporation is charged with enhancing the business climate for investment and development and attracting new business to Bluffton by facilitating economic and real estate development opportunities.

## Mission

- Foster a positive business climate & stimulate economic success;
- Attract new businesses to Bluffton and facilitate economic development opportunities;
- Link public projects to private investment;
- Provide Leadership at Buckwalter Place Multi-County Commerce Park; and,
- Establish partnerships/relationships with business community, SC Department of Commerce, Beaufort County, and others.

## FY 14-15 Accomplishments

- Acquired additional 12 acres at Buckwalter Place;
- Launched a Corporation Website;
- Established common vision Master Plan for Buckwalter Place; and
- Executed a Public Private Partnership Agreement with Southeastern Development Associates (formerly Blanchard & Calhoun Commercial) at Buckwalter Place Commerce Park.



## Officers

Berl Davis Chairman, Chief Executive Officer Palmetto Electric Cooperative

Sarah E. Reed Vice Chairman, Financial Advisor Edward Jones

Greg J. Johnson Secretary, Assistant Vice-President and Branch Sales Manager Regions Bank

## Directors

Mac S. Dunaway Managing Partner Dunaway & Cross

Richard Gough, President, Technical College of the Lowcountry

Lynn King, Community Relations Manager, TidePointe/Broad Creek Care Center

Tom Neal, Chief Operating Officer, Hilton Head Hospital

Brian Rose, Jr., President and Principal, Beacon Insurance

Meredith Truitt, Director of Total Rewards and Human Resources Information Systems, eviCore Healthcare

# Bluffton Public Development Corporation

[www.blufftonbusiness.com](http://www.blufftonbusiness.com)

## Ex-Officio

Evva Anderson - Beaufort County School District Board of Education

Karen Lavery -Town of Bluffton Town Council

Larry Toomer - Town of Bluffton Town Council

Marc Orlando, ICMA-CM, Town of Bluffton Town Manager

Shirley Freeman Treasurer - Town of Bluffton Finance Director

## Executive Director

Shawn Leininger, AICP, Town of Bluffton, Assistant Town Manager



In a world of innovation, one thing is certain: The better the idea, the faster you need to get it to market.

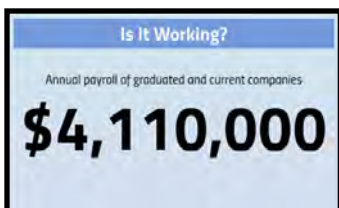
A public-private partnership between the Town of Bluffton and Clemson University, this 501 (c) (3) organization reports to an experienced Board appointed by Town Council. The Don Ryan Center for Innovation (DRCI) is a key component of the Town's economic development strategy, which is to grow a regional economic center with a diverse economy.

The Don Ryan Center for Innovation offers hands on consulting, office space, and links participants to intellectual property, technology evaluation, product development services, seed financing, mentorships, and support resources.

Operations are funded by Town of Bluffton and private support.

The DRCI is the regions only incubator program providing the resources entrepreneurs need to assist them in their quest for success.

As of June 2015, DRCI graduate and current companies employee 77 people who fund an annual payroll of more than \$4,100,000.



#### FY 14-15 HIGHLIGHTS

- Graduated three additional innovators- 12 total;
- Secured \$100,000 SCDOC grant;
- Working with Beaufort County Schools entrepreneurship programs;
- Pilot entrepreneurship program with SCAD;
- 3D printing capabilities;
- FREE public education sessions;
- Hosted annual golf tournament;
- Launched LowcountryWORKS.com



[www.ryan.innovation-center.com](http://www.ryan.innovation-center.com)



**Don Ryan Center for Innovation**

#### Officers

Matt Green - Chairman  
Kevin Ryan - Treasurer  
Walter Nester - Secretary

#### Directors

Carlton Dallas  
Deborah Edmonson  
Larry Hughes  
Michael Mathews  
Lisa Sulka

#### Ex-Officio

Marc Orlando  
Jared Jester  
Bill Miles  
Dr. Jeffrey Moss  
Meredith Truitt  
Kathleen Mercier

#### Executive Director

David Nelems





# Human Resources

The Human Resources Department provides leadership, direction and support needed to attract retain and develop talented individuals to align ourselves with the ever-changing needs of the Town of Bluffton. We help with Town Departments maintain a dedicated workforce capable of delivering exceptional services that make Bluffton a special place to live, work and play. We are dedicated to the citizens of Bluffton by providing the best employees for jobs within the Town.

## Employee Engagement

**An employee engagement survey was conducted during the last year. The high scores reflected a workforce that recognizes the Town has a lot of opportunities and is a wonderful place to work.**

As a result of the survey, an Employee Committee was formed to address and prioritize some suggestions. Their work led to continuing efforts to maintain employee engagement .

Current initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- Developing a comprehensive new employee-onboarding policy & curriculum to fully integrate into the Town of Bluffton;
- Instill a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy to give employee time to our community;
- Continually encourage and promote employee recognition programs; and

- Embrace the history and beauty of Bluffton with guest speakers from the community to conduct presentations and tours.

## Community Involvement

Town employees gave back to the community in a number of ways such as:

- Raised more than \$1,500 for United Way;
- Volunteered time to support community events such as the May River Clean Up;
- Donated to the local blood bank at several blood drives at Town Hall;
- Organized a "Souper Bowl" party and donated canned goods to a local food pantry;
- Participated and supported several walks and events in the area to raise funds and awareness for The American Heart Association, the Alzheimer Association and Breast Cancer Awareness; and
- Collected clothing for "Lowcountry Dress for Success."



## Celebrate Employees

The Town recognizes and supports our wonderful employees in a number of ways:

- Provided each employee with a tree sapling for Annual Employee Appreciation Day to recognize them as well as support our Key is the Tree Policy;
- STAR Awards for on-the-spot recognition;
- NOVA Award to honor and recognize the top employees of the Employee of the Year;
- Birthdays & Anniversary celebrations monthly to recognize employees celebrating a birthday and/or anniversary that month; and
- Honor employees as they retire from public service employment at the Town of Bluffton.

## Wellness Initiatives

- The Town recognizes the value of a healthy workforce by supporting and providing employees with healthy and wellness-related programs such as the Farm-To-Table Bag program with the Bluffton Farmer's Market. This supports the local Farmer's Market and gives staff an array of locally grown food items to cook for their family.
- Each spring the Human Resources Department organizes biometric screenings for employees and their family members on the State Health Plan. This provides employees with an on-site screening that transfers into in-depth information about their personal health.
- Believing that "healthy is the new wealthy," the Human Resources Department organized and scheduled several seminars and lunch-n-learns to educate employees about their financial health. With the use of some local financial institutions, employees were able to meet one-on-one with professionals to learn about Identify Theft, Managing your Money and the Importance of Savings for the Future.
- We encourage exercise and weight loss with stepping challenges and awards for employees losing the highest percentage of weight over specified period of time.
- The State Retirement System was invited to speak with employees about the retirement plan in place. The regional representative from the deferred compensation company came on-site to facilitate presentations to educate employees about the optional 401k and 457 plans.

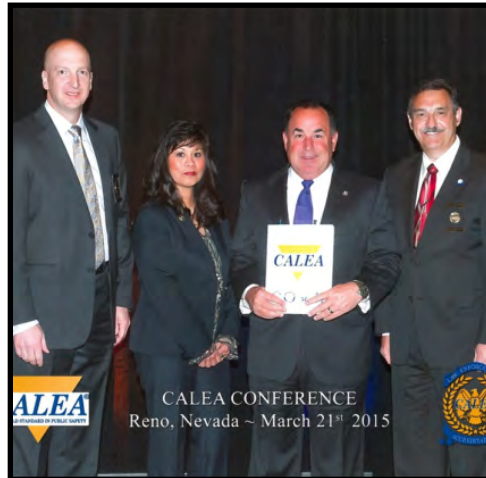




# Bluffton Police Department

**The mission of the Bluffton Police Department is to provide the highest quality of service to our community and its visitors by promoting a safe environment through a police-citizen partnership, with an emphasis on mutual trust, honor, professionalism and dedication of duty.**

## CALEA Reaccreditation and South Carolina Recertification



The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) awarded Bluffton Police Department Accreditation with Excellence; the highest level of recognition of the reaccreditation process on March 21, 2015 during its conference in Reno, Nevada. "The Accreditation with Excellence Award" means the Bluffton Police Department goes above and beyond in their policies and procedures, reaching the highest level of public safety professionalism. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc. also awarded the department on June 4, 2015.

## Emergency Management/Training Division

The Bluffton Police Department created an Emergency Management/Training Division that is responsible for the Town's Emergency Preparedness and Planning. With a town emergency operation center housed at the Bluffton Police Department this division oversees department training as well as community events planning and permitting.

## Bluffton Police Department Substation

On August 25, 2015, the Town of Bluffton Town Council hosted an Open House and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to unveil the Old Town Bluffton Police Substation, which is located on May River Road in the heart of the Bluffton Historic District. Built in the 1940's, the Police Substation structure once served as Bluffton's Town Hall and Town Jail.

## Bluffton Police Department Installs Camera Downtown

The Bluffton Police Department installed 22 public safety cameras in Old Town Bluffton. Located at public parks, and along main roadways, these cameras were strategically placed to deter crime, assist with crowd monitoring, and will be used as a tool for evidence recovery. .





## Mentorship Program

The Bluffton Police Department's Mentorship Program has become a great success. Several officers from the department have "adopted" a classroom from one of our local elementary schools and meets with them on a regular basis. These police officers have become a regular presence in their schools. Officer Lauren Brown, the creator of the mentorship program, will be coaching Girls on Track, a women's 6th-8th grade class at River Ridge Academy in January of 2016. Officers will also be partnering with local community members at the schools as part of their mentor program targeted towards growing males.



## Care Program

The Bluffton Police Department Neighborhood Services Unit is in charge of our outreach C.A.R.E. program (Citizen Assistance Response Efforts). The program is aimed at contacting our elderly or homebound citizens for a health and welfare check. The program provides the opportunity to socialize by telephone with someone who cares and also serves an early alert system if a recipient should need emergency services. Currently we have 9 recipients who receive calls on a daily basis by one of our 4 volunteers.



## Bluffton Police Department Joining Hands with the Arrhythmia Alliance

The Bluffton Police Department and the Arrhythmia Alliance are joining hands for the Gavin Quance campaign in an effort to equip all patrol vehicles with Automated External Defibrillator's. The Gavin Quance campaign was started in April of 2015 and is named after a young boy drowned in his family's pool. Although all our officers are trained in CPR, an AED in every police vehicle could possible help save more lives. CPR alone can increase the survival rate to 9% but when combines with the use of an AED, survival can reach more than 50%.



## Chief Joey Reynolds Named First Vice President of the FBI National Academy

Chief Joey Reynolds has served on the FBINAA's Executive board since 2010. In October, Chief Reynolds was elevated to First Vice President and will be sworn in as the Associations' International President in July 2016.

The FBI National Academy Associates, Inc. (FBINAA) is a non-profit, international organization of nearly 18,000 senior law enforcement professionals dedicated to providing their communities, states, countries, and profession with the highest degree of law enforcement expertise, training, education and information. The FBINAA is the strongest law enforcement leadership network in the world and is dedicated to strengthening the rule of law around the globe. The mission of the FBINAA is to provide the membership of the FBINAA with opportunities for continuing education, training, professional development, peer networking, and research in law enforcement disciplines, which will promote improved leadership, cooperation, services, efficiency's and higher standards of professional conduct on all levels of law enforcement throughout the world.



## Major Joe Manning Completes Northwestern State University's Center for Public Safety Executive Management Program

Major Joe Manning recently completed the 22 week Executive Management Program through Northwestern University's Center for Public Safety. This course provides intensive instruction for policy making executives and combines management principles with the study of emerging law enforcement issues. Participating executives prepare themselves and their organizations to respond proactively to dynamic public safety environments.





# Department of Finance and Administration

The Town received an unqualified “clean opinion” audit statement for the FY 2014 Financial Statement reports. This is the most confident response provided by independent audit firms to users that the financial statements present a fair representation of the entity’s financial position and are free of material misstatements. The town is in sound financial condition with the growth in the tax base in recent years, supported by written financial policies council adopted, and its professional management. The Town initially issued \$14 million Tax Increment Financing Bonds to support the redevelopment of the Town’s Infrastructure and municipal facilities in 2005 and 2006. These funds were used for various Capital Improvement Projects occurring over the course of the next few years. In December 2014, the Town refinanced the TIF Bond for a gross savings to taxpayers of approximately \$735,000 with a present value savings of approximately \$255,000.

The Town hosted a seminar in the fall of 2014 for representatives of local nonprofits interested in applying for Town of Bluffton accommodations tax funds. The seminar was designed to show applicants how to apply and strengthen their applications. The seminar included information about state requirements, final reporting and application guidelines. The town has an average of \$265,000 annually to disperse to nonprofit organizations to promote tourism, as well as arts, cultural events and other tourism-related expenditures.

More accomplishments include:

- AA+ Municipal Bond Rating issued by Standard’s & Poor - 2014;
- 2014 Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada;
- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award for the 2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)

from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management. The Town has received the CAFR award for the last 7 consecutive years; and

- 2014 Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting (PAFR) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada.

## Business License

**More and more businesses are choosing to do business in Bluffton, SC.** There are 1,071

businesses located within the town, and a total of 2,261 total business licenses issued. The Town accepts the state-wide uniform business license application form instituted by the Municipal Association of South Carolina.

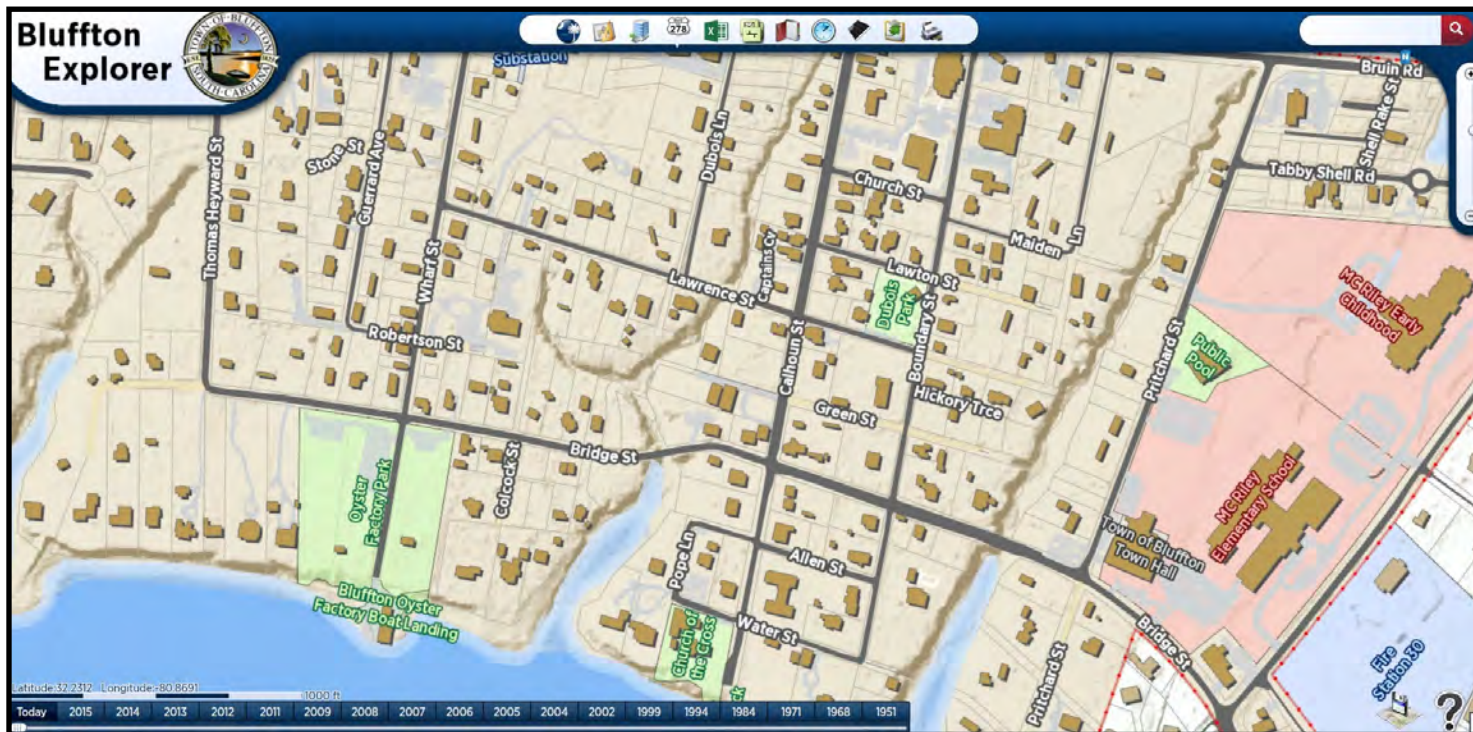
The building market is once again on the upturn in Bluffton. Building Permits are up 48% from this time last year. Contractors encompass 16% of the in town business licenses issued in 2015 to date. Other predominate industries within the Town include Personal Services, currently 198 in town or roughly 18% (i.e. beauty and nail salons, massage and other spa services, pet services, event planners and suppliers, photographers); Professional Services, 147 or 14%; Medical, 132 or 12%; Retail, 121 or 11%; Restaurants, 73 or 7% and Real Estate, 54 or 5%.





## Information Technology (IT) and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

The Town's IT Department continues to provide valued customer service to the Town's employees enabling services to continue with minimal interruptions and promoting the effective use of up-to-date technology and geographical information. During fiscal year 2015 Phase 1 of wireless infrastructure upgrades were implemented, a four year computer replacement plan was instituted, and ongoing upgrades to Bluffton Explorer were performed in the areas of new roads, buildings, pictometry imagery, stormwater infrastructure and police patrol grids. In addition to these initiatives the IT/GIS team created a system for Hurricane Safety (& Damage) assessment that can be utilized by the Town in the event of a natural disaster.



Bluffton Explorer can be accessed at <http://www.townofbluffton.us/gis/>

## Municipal Court

The Town's Municipal Court has had over an eighty percent increase in processing cases compared to last fiscal year. To facilitate the processing of warrants the Town appointed a new staff Ministerial Recorder to support our judges and the Bluffton Police Department (PD). In addition, Municipal Court worked in conjunction with the Bluffton PD to implement a tracking system for officers and court personnel to provide a comparison of the number of defendants appearing in court versus actual cases on our weekly dockets. The Town entered into an intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding to provide on call weekend Judge Services to the Town of Hilton Head Island to process their arrest warrants, search warrants, and subpoenas.

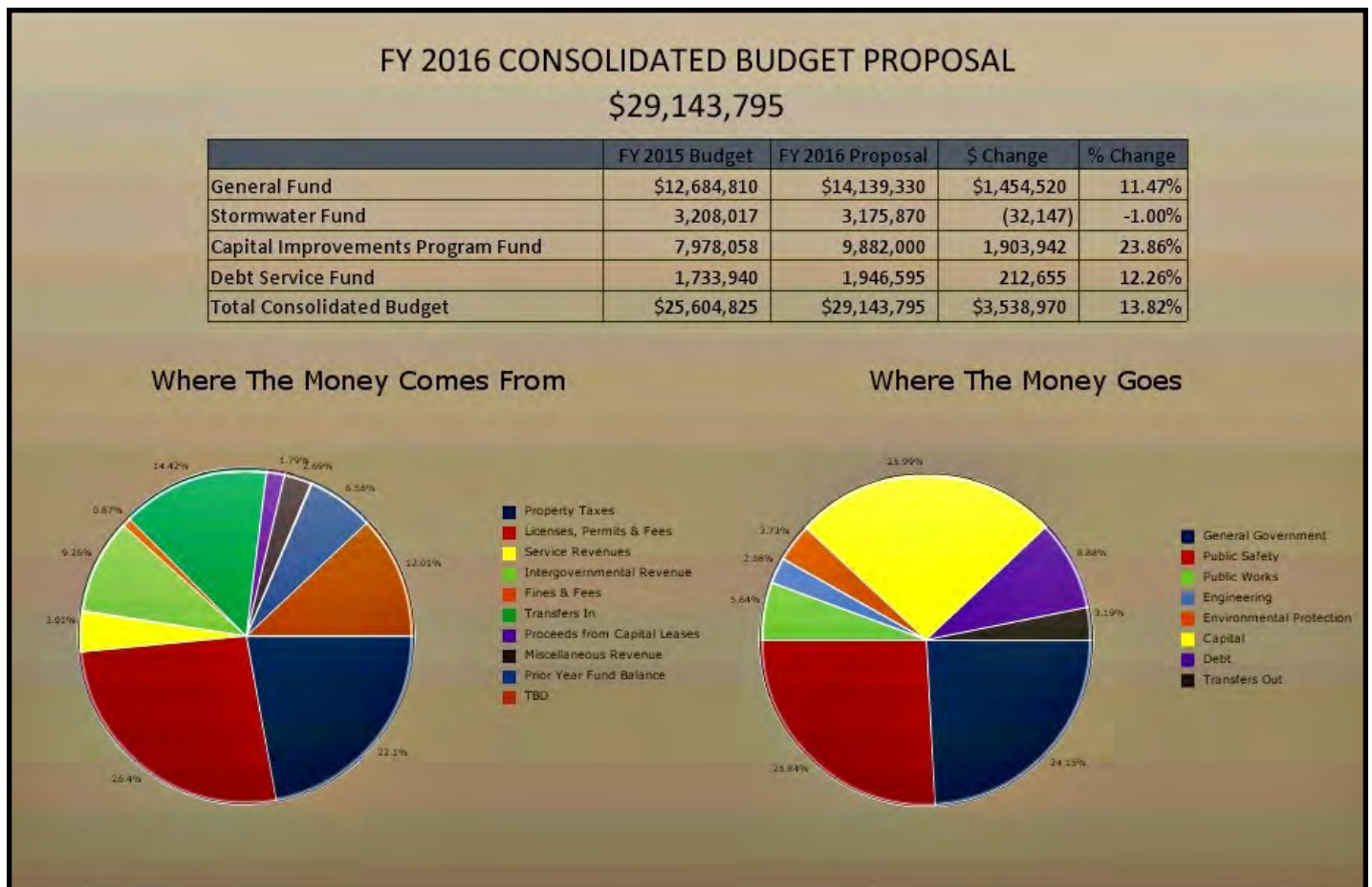


Africa Aiken is sworn in as Ministerial Recorder for the Town of Bluffton by Judge Clifford Bush, III.





<http://www.townofbluffton.sc.gov/Documents/dashboard.pdf>



# Growth Management Department

The Growth Management Department is comprised of three divisions including the Planning and Community Development Office, Building Safety Office and the Customer Service Center.

Through these divisions, the Growth Management Department provides the following services:

- Administering the development, zoning, historic preservation, community development, and transportation policies, programs and regulations of Bluffton to ensure the sound management of Bluffton's growth while protecting the quality of life and economic vitality;
- Enforcing adopted building codes and technical standards to protect the health and safety of the community; and
- Providing professional, friendly and efficient customer service to meet the needs and expectations of the Bluffton community.



## 31% increase in New Housing Starts

657 New Housing Permits issued in FY 2015  
502 New Housing Permits issued in FY 2014

## 36% increase in New Construction Value

\$293 Million in FY 2015  
\$215 Million in FY 2014

## 29% increase in Building Permits Issued

1,779 in FY 2015  
1,378 in FY 2014

## 96% increase in # of Development Plan Approvals

61 FY 2015  
31 FY 2014



## Planning and Community Development Office

- Provided approximately \$45,000 to 11 income qualified homeowners in order to provide safe and dry home repairs;
- Provided nearly \$120,000 to 4 income qualified homeowners in order to rehabilitate homes and bring the homes up to current code standards;
- Implemented new programs to the Neighborhood Assistance Program including private road repair for emergency service access and connection to the public sanitary sewer system;
- Procured a Request for Qualifications soliciting development teams to partner with the Town for the creation of Workforce Housing;
- Adopted an updated Master Plan for Oyster Factory Park that reflects the current vision of the only public park overlooking the May River;
- Completed conceptual design on the final phase of May River Road Streetscape which will provide ½ mile of new sidewalks, plantings, pedestrian lighting and on-street parking further connecting Old Town to nearby neighborhoods; and
- Developed a Structural Assessment and Preservation Plan for the historic Garvin House restoration project in Oyster Factory Park.



*The Garvin House, located within Oyster Factory Park, was built in c. 1870 and is the first freedman's home built along the May River.*

## Building Safety Office

- Established a goal of a 10 day turnaround review of building permit plans;
- Established next day inspection services;
- Conducted over 22,000 building inspections; and
- Certified by the Insurance Service Office, a nationwide provider of insurance data audited the Building Safety Office and placed the office in the top 10% of effectiveness for enforcing building safety standards in South Carolina.

## Customer Service Center

- Revitalized customer service approach with more efficient process, simplified applications, and a “how can I help” attitude;
- Added business support services with an expanded business specialist position to help guide businesses through the business opening and expansion process; and
- Established a web-based Citizen Access Portal providing online services for application submittals and fee payments.





# Department of Engineering

Through its three divisions – project management, public works and stormwater management – the Engineering department provides essential services and project management which:

- Protect the health, safety and welfare of our citizens;
- Enhance the quality of life and economic opportunities for our community; and
- Protect our most treasured natural resources – the May River and other watersheds.

## Project Management Division

- Installed fourteen (14) traffic control bollards on Calhoun Street to provide for pedestrian safety during community events;
- Improved a number of Town facilities including:
  - Renovated Tom Herbkersman Commons to create a better functioning, more enjoyable park through improved landscaping, seating and lighting;
  - Renovated DuBois Park to provide improved safety features to assist busy parents with keeping their children within the park, improved landscaping and lighting, integrated GreenBug pest control (a Don Ryan Center for Innovation graduate) to keep nuisance insects at bay, and
- As part of a focused effort to improve parks, made enhancements at Oscar J. Frazier Park – Field of Dreams and Oyster Factory Park to increase visibility of both parks making them easier to locate and more inviting for families to gather.





## Stormwater Management Division

As guided by the May River Watershed Action Plan, actions that protected our waterways this past year included:

- Adopted a mandatory sanitary sewer connection ordinance;
- Adopted the May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan, which guides future Capital Improvement Program (CIP) sewer projects;
- As part of the Neighborhood Assistance Program, responded to thirty two (32) requests for septic system maintenance assistance;
- Conducted 2,159 construction site inspections to ensure sediment and the additional pollutants it might carry do not reach our waterways; and
- Expanded the scope of the Neighbors for Clean Water stormwater outreach campaign county-wide; and
- Created a “Citizens Guide to Bluffton’s MS4 Program” brochure in English and Spanish.



## Public Works Division

Restructured the Division to streamline maintenance programs and provide lean management strategies.

Increased operational efficiencies and invested in equipment allowing for the expansion and enhancement of programs offered by the Division.





# bluffton

HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY™

## Town of Bluffton

### Awards, Achievements & Accolades

#### Town of Bluffton/General

- Garden & Gun Magazine named Bluffton a “Southern Dream Town.” (June/July 2015).
- Niche.com named Bluffton #3, Best Towns to Raise a Family in South Carolina (2015).
- Forbes Magazine named Bluffton one of the Top 25 U.S. Cities for Retirement (2014).
- Family Circle Magazine featured Town Councilman Larry Toomer, his family and his family business, Bluffton Oyster Company (June 2014). Southern Living Magazine selected Bluffton as the site for its 2014 Idea House.
- The Huffington Post named Bluffton its #1 destination for its list, “Ten Amazing Non-Beach Alternatives for a Summer Getaway” (2014).
- Only in Your State, The 18 Wedding Venues in SC Which Are Perfect in Every Way, #10 Rose Hill Mansion; #14 Palmetto Bluff (2015).
- NerdWallet, a consumer advisory company, named Bluffton one of the ten “Cities on The Rise in South Carolina,” (2014).
- NerdWallet, a consumer advisory company, named Bluffton one of the ten “Top Cities for Homeownership in South Carolina,” (2014).
- Movoto, a real estate web-based service, named Bluffton one of the “Safest Places in South Carolina,” (2014).
- Bluffton’s Farmers Market named “Most Celebrated Farmers Market in South Carolina,” by American Farmland Trust (2013, 2012).
- Bluffton’s Farmers Market named #1 in South Carolina for the following categories: People’s Choice, Focus on Farmers, Healthy Food for All, Pillar of the Community, & Champion for the Environment. (2015)
- Bluffton’s Highway 46 designated a “South Carolina Scenic Byway,” by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (2012).
- Don Ryan Center for Innovation/Clemson Technology Village; Bluffton was the first non-metropolitan town in South Carolina to partner with Clemson University to form a private-public Technology Village (i.e. business incubator).

#### Town of Bluffton/Mayor, Council & Employee Achievement

- Mayor Lisa Sulka, President, Association of South Carolina Mayors (2014).
- Mayor Lisa Sulka, Vice President, Association of South Carolina Mayors (2013).
- Mayor Lisa Sulka, Honorary Trustee, Board of Trustees, Heritage Classic Foundation (2014).
- Marc Orlando, Town Manager, credentialed local government manager, International City/County Management Association (2014).
- Marc Orlando, appointed to the Market Impact Council of the regional Chapters of Urban Land Institute of South Carolina, Charlotte and Research Triangle.
- Frank Hodge, Chairman, South Carolina Building Code Council & 2005 Past President of the International Code Council.
- Chief Joey Reynolds, 3rd Vice President, F.B.I. National Academy Associates (2013)
- Major Joseph Manning, Deputy Chief/Bluffton Police Department, F.B.I National Joint Terrorism Task Force (6-month fellowship in Washington, D.C.)/Former Lieutenant, Pinellas County, Fla., Sheriff’s Office in Narcotics Division, Internal Affairs Unit, Intelligence Unit and member of SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) Team.
- F.B.I National Academy Graduates/Bluffton Police Department: Chief Joey Reynolds, Lt. Joseph Babkiewicz, Officer Sheldon Epstein, and Lt. Angel Tubbs (retired).
- Kim Jones, director of stormwater management, completed LEAD (Leading, Educating and Developing) Program/Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service/University of Virginia (2014).
- Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce Leadership Graduates: Kim Chapman, Lisa Cunningham, Shirley Freeman, Aubrie Giroux, Trisha Greathouse, Kim Jones, Debbie Szpanka, Erin Schumacher and Lt. Scott Chandler.

## Planning, Growth Management and Urban Design

- Best Community Revitalization Award from Southern Living Magazine for the Wharf Street Redevelopment Project (August 2014).
- Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) Achievement Award, 10,001-20,000 Population Category, for the Wharf Street Redevelopment Project (2013).
- Palmetto Forum Affordable Housing Achievement Award for the Wharf Street Redevelopment Project (2012).
- Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) Achievement Award, 1,000-5,000 Population Category for the Bluffton Small Home Series (2003).
- Natural Resources, Environmental Protection and Beautification: Charleston's Post & Courier article, "Bluffton is an Innovator in Using Development Rights Transfer Program to Reduce Sprawl," (August 2014).
- Tree City USA Designation from the Arbor Day Foundation (2013, 2012, 2011).
- Inaugural Sustainable Communities Building Block Program Participant selected by the Environmental Protection Agency (2010).

## Law Enforcement/Bluffton Police Department

- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), Accreditation with Excellence, the highest level of recognition of the reaccreditation process (2015).
- South Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation (SCLEA), 2013.
- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) Re-Accreditation for the Bluffton Police Department (2012).
- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) Accreditation for the Bluffton Police Department (2009).

## Financial Management

- AA+ Municipal Bond Rating issued by Standard's & Poor (2014).
- AA- Municipal Bond Rating issued by Standard's & Poor (2010).
- Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (2014, 2013, and 2012).
- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008).
- Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual

Financial Reporting (PAFR) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (2013, 2012, 2011).

## Historic Awards and Designations

- Preserve America Community Designation for the Bluffton Historic District by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (2005).
- National Register of Historic Places Designation for the Bluffton Historic District by the National Park Service (1996).

## Palmetto Bluff

- Bluffton is also home to Palmetto Bluff, a 19,217 acre world-renowned residential community and resort, which consistently receives top awards and accolades:
- Yahoo Travel News: The Coolest Hotel in Every State, The Inn at Palmetto Bluffton (October 16, 2014)
- Travelers Choice Award by Trip Advisor; Rated No. 8 Top 25 Hotels in the United States (2013).
- Readers' Choice Award by Andrew Harper's Hideaway Report; Rated No. 9 Top U.S. Hideaway, No. 5 Top Family Resorts (2012).
- Top 100 Golf Courses by Golf Magazine; Rated No. 51 (2012).
- World's Best Hotels for Families by Travel + Leisure; Rated No. 4 in Continental U.S. and Canada (2012).
- Five-Diamond Award by AAA; Most Luxurious Accommodations in North America (2013, 2012, 2011).
- World's Best Award by Travel + Leisure; Rated No. 6 Top Resort in Continental U.S., No. 79 Top 100 Hotels Overall (2012).
- Best Hotels in the USA by US News & World Report; Rated No. 1 U.S. Hotel (2012).
- Top Golf Resorts in the World by Condé Nast Traveler; Rated No. Southern U.S. Resort (2012).
- Top 270 Spas by Condé Nast Traveler; Rated No. 15 (2012).
- TENNIS Magazine Top 50 Tennis Resorts; Rated No. 3 South Carolina Tennis Resort (2012).
- Readers' Choice Platinum List by Celebrated Living (2012).



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(c) B. Lance

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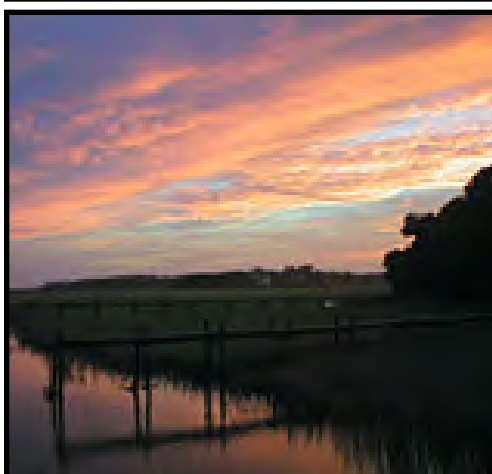
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